(b) the number of persons provided permanent jobs during last three years alongwith the percentage thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to give them the status of Government employees; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and would be placed on the Table of the House.

[English]

Upgradation of Post Offices in U.P.

1530. SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to upgrade some branch and sub-post offices on the basis of population in Uttar Pradesh during 1997-98; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) and (b) Post Offices are not upgraded on the basis of population. A target of opening 6 Departmental Sub Post Offices in Uttar Pradesh has been fixed for Annual Plan 1997-98 subject to availability of resources. These could either be new post offices or upgraded ones.

[Translation]

Modernisation of Computerised Railway Reservation

1531. SHRI RAVINDER KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to improve the computerised Railway reservation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the computers installed at return ticket reservation counter in Delhi remained out of order for several days during May-June, 1997; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken to solve such problems?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) and (b) Improvement and modernisation of computerised passenger reservation service is an on-going process and steps are regularly being taken to improve the quality of service to passengers by introducing facilities namely.

(1) Automated reservation status enquiry through Interactive Voice Response System in which telephonic enquiries are answered promoptly an efficiently through a computer simulated voice.

(2) Facility of Reservation Availability Position Information Display (RAPID) which has been provided at major reservation officers.

(3) Networking of the five main computer systems, the software for which has already been partially developed and implemented at Delhi and Secunderabad. Networking is proposed to be done between these two Systems in the first phase.

(4) Installation of high speed telecommunication links between the five main systems to substantially increase the efficiency and speed of data transfer.

(5) Expansion of computer reservation facilities to additional stations from year to year and opening of additional satellite reservation offices in the metropolitan and major towns.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. There is no such instance when computers installed at return ticket reservation counter in Delhi remained out of order for several days during May-June, 1997. However, there were recurring problems in telecommunication channel links in 5 systems at Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai, Madras and Secunderabad. The average working period of counters was mantained at 97% efficiency level.

[Translation]

New Line from Darbhanga to Hasanpur

1532. SHRIMATI SUBHAWATI DEVI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to lay a new railway line from Darbhanga to Hasanpur Kusheswar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. However, a new line is already under construction from Sakri to Hasanpur via Kusheswarsthan. A survey has been taken up for construction of a new line from Darbhanga to Saharsa via Kusheswarsthan. Further consideration of the project will be possible once the survey report becomes available.

[English]

Liquid Fuel Power Plants

1533. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the liquid fuel based power plants are considered to be short term solution to the shortage of power in the country;

(b) whether the Government have taken a decision to subsidised the liquid fuel imports for power plants under the administered pricing mechanism;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the likely effect thereof on the feasibility of setting up of liquid fuel power plants in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Pricing of liquid fuel imports for power plants would be outside the administered pricing mechanism and would not be linked up with Oil Pool Account. The prices would be based on international prices and would not have any element of subsidy. This is not expected to have any adverse effect on the feasibility of setting up of liquid fuel projects to the extent of 12000 MW.

[Translation]

Shortage of Power in Villages of Rajasthan

1534. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is aware of the fact that despite vigorous efforts of Rural Corporation of India there is shortage of power in various villages and towns of Rajasthan and there are various such villages which have not been electrified as yet;

(b) if so, the names of the districts and the villages which have been electrified by the Rural Electrification Corporation of India with the assistance of the State Government during the last three years; and

(c) the names of the district which have been selected for electrification as per the target fixed for the current year and the amount allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB) has informed that even though there is a shortage of power in the State it has not affected achievement of village electrification plan targets in the State. As per 1981 census out of 34,968 inhabited villages in Rajasthan, the State has reported electrification of 31,320 villages upto March, 1997. The balance 3648 villages remains to be electrified.

(b) Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) only provides financial assistance to State Electricity Boards/ Electricity Departments for rural electrification programme and actual execution of the programme including electrification of villages is undertaken by the respective SEBs/Electricity Departments. District-wise number of villages electrified by RSEB both under REC Financed Scheme and State Plan funds during the past three years are given in the attached statement.

(c) State-wise rural electrification programme for the current financial year 1997-98 is yet to be finalised by the Planning Commission. However, it is propose to electrify 480 villages in Rajasthan under REC Financed Scheme.

Statement

District-wise village electrified during 1994-95 to 1996-97*

S.No.	District	No. of inhabited villages 1981 census	Villages Electrified During		
			1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Ajmer	923	15	1	14
2.	Alwar	1892	16	10	12
3.	Banswara	1445	35	8	41
4.	Baran	1045	40	13	12
5.	Barmer	853	23	9	7
6.	Bharatpur	1328	22	11	19
7.	Bhilwara	1512	9	3	-
8.	Bikaner	571	5	-	3
9.	Bundi	783	16	16	21
10.	Chittorgarh	2144	46	47	58
11.	Churu	855	17	7	12
12.	Dausa	793	18	41	21
13.	Dholpur	538	11	1	3
14.	Dungarpur	832	16	16	5
15.	Hanumangarh	-	75	139	145